

REMARKS

Claims 1-32 remain for consideration in the above-referenced patent application, claims 26-32 having been added by this Preliminary Amendment.

Claims 1-25 are currently amended by this Preliminary Amendment.

This Preliminary Amendment is submitted to insert a paragraph claiming priority to earlier related applications, to correct minor spelling and clerical errors present in the original English language translation of the corresponding German patent application.

Claims 1-25 are amended solely to place the claims, originally filed in German in the corresponding German patent application, in better form for consideration by the United States Patent and Trademark Office. Specifically, the claims are modified to remove the “and/or” language, to rewrite them using the more customarily acceptable “or” language, and to clarify the meaning of the translated claims.

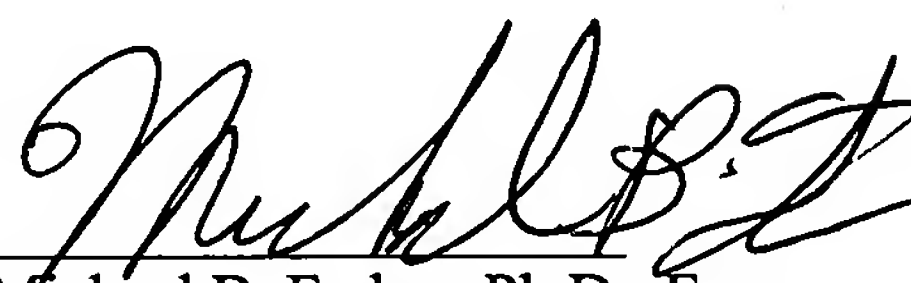
These amendments to the specification and claims were made for clarity only and do not introduce any new matter. Support for the proposed amendments is found throughout the specification of the present application. This Preliminary Amendment is being filed in accordance with recently revised 37 C.F.R. § 1.121, as set forth in 68 F.R. 38611 (June 30, 2003). If any amendment is considered to be not in compliance with recently revised 37 C.F.R. § 1.121, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at his earliest possible convenience.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above remarks, entry of the amendments to the specification and claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Michael B. Farber, Ph.D., Esq.

CATALYST LAW GROUP, APC
9710 Scranton Road, Suite 170
San Diego, CA 92121
(858) 200-0587
(858) 450-9834 (Fax)